



## TEACH IT TALK SESSION 8

This talk guide is just that: a guide. It's not intended to be a manuscript to read aloud. It's here to give you ideas, structure, and stories to blend with your personal study (Prep It) as you prepare your talk.

The content complements the other Teach It guides, allowing you to give a talk on the same topic students are studying in other settings (such as small groups) without too much overlap.

### 1. Materials (Optional)

- Movie Clip: *Rocky III*. Scene: Rocky Balboa's training: Chapter 13, "Getting Strong"—DVD counter cues, 1:15:22 to 1:18:47). You also may be able to find a clip on a video-sharing Web site (search words such as *Rocky 3 training*).
- A pair of pruning shears and something to cut, such as a twig or a pencil
- Quotations to introduce the idea that pain could be a good thing

### 2. Optional Openings

#### MOVIE CLIP

Begin your talk by showing the motivational training segment from *Rocky III*. Intro the clip by noting—

**At the beginning of *Rocky III*, Rocky is living in luxury with no problems. That leads to comfort and apathy. Under the inspiration of Apollo Creed, he gets back to the basics of training—training that hurts. Eventually Rocky uses this pain to, well, beat up on Clubber Lang.**

#### VISUAL ILLUSTRATION

Hold up some pruning shears, and cut something with them (such as a twig or a pencil) to show that they're real.

Say something like—

**I could take these pruning shears, and while I'm cutting some branches, if I'm not paying attention, I could cut this finger clean off. But then I'd have to live with one less finger, and I'd wonder why I used this illustration. But if I felt the pain of the blades hitting my finger before they actually cut it off, that would definitely—and quickly—motivate me to stop. At that point, pain is a good thing, because then I'd have my finger to use later.**

#### QUOTATIONS

Share these quotations to introduce the idea that pain could be a good thing.

**Our greatest glory consists not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.**  
—Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774, Anglo-Irish author and poet)

**When the stomach is full, it is easy to talk of fasting.**  
—Saint Jerome (circa 347–420, Bible translator, chief translator of the Latin Vulgate)

### 3. Digging In

#### PERSONAL STORY

Share a personal story about a time when pain turned out to be a good thing, such as:

- when a painful breakup ended up working out for the best
- when a body pain alerted you to a medical condition that could have gotten a whole lot worse if you hadn't seen a doctor in time
- when something turned out to be a blessing in disguise, but at first it looked like a bad situation

Here's an example:

**When I was in the seventh grade, I was in a science class that used electric hot pads that looked exactly the same, whether hot or cold. They were these little metal squares that would heat up and cool down really quickly. Well, one day I struck up a conversation with a cute girl and just happened to lean on one of those hot plates. I didn't just touch the plate; I leaned with the majority of my weight going onto that hand, onto the plate. It was kind of hot. In fact it was so hot that the skin on the front side of my hand instantly bubbled up. It was an awful half-second. At the end of my life when I ask to see the videotape of my most athletic move, I'm sure God will show just how fast I moved my hand off that plate. The truth is that I was clearly motivated to move that hand. In much the same way, I'm motivated to go to the dentist only when I'm in pain. There's just something about pain that works in me to provide some pretty solid motivation. It's not the kind of motivation that I necessarily look for, but it sure does work. Because of the pain in my hand, I was able to move my hand away and save the use of it. If not, the plate would have burned beyond repair the muscle, tissue, and ligaments that work together to help me play guitar. I can strum a guitar today because of that pain. I've even used that guitar to glorify God, and I've seen God use the music of that guitar to speak into people's lives. You might say I thank God for that pain.**

Continue with—

**For you Seinfeld watchers, do you remember the episode when Kramer brought a lawsuit against a coffee company because the coffee spilled on him while he was trying to sneak it into the movie theater? The plot involved two national news items happening about the time the episode originally aired—the O.J. Simpson murder trial and a lawsuit against a fast-food chain for coffee that was too hot. Kramer's lawyer was Jackie Chiles, made to act like Johnny Cochran from O.J.'s defense team.**

**The coffee company wanted to settle out of court and planned to offer Kramer \$50,000 and free coffee in all their stores. So a meeting was set up between the coffee heads and Kramer and his lawyer. They were all seated, and the coffee people spoke first, saying, "We're prepared to offer you all the free coffee you want in any of our stores throughout North America and Europe, plus..." And suddenly Kramer jumped to his feet, thrust out a handshake, and said, "I'll take it!" End of scene. In the next scene, Kramer's lawyer, in disbelief that Kramer spoke up, told Kramer he was waiting for the "plus..." Kramer said he was so excited to get anything at all, and he loves coffee. So he missed out on \$50,000.**

**This is probably how God sees us. There are so many things we want that we think are the best things in the world. But they're just little things that don't amount to much. God wants so much more for each of us.**

Continue with—

**Jesus said in John 11:15, "...and for your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him."**

Mary and Martha had absolutely no idea what Jesus was up to. All they could see was their pain—their hurt over losing their brother. Maybe they even felt the pain of a friend (Jesus) not coming through for them. They knew Jesus could heal Lazarus, and for some reason, he seemed less than enthusiastic about it. That was bound to hurt.

But the true point of this scene comes after the dead man comes walking out of the tomb.

John 11:45 says, “Therefore many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary, and had seen what Jesus did, put their faith in him.”

This is why Jesus did the “signs” that he did: that others might believe. These people came to comfort Mary and Martha and pay their respects. They probably wouldn’t have been around had Lazarus just been sick. They’d have just dropped off their Tupperware containers full of soup and headed off to their lives. But because they were there, they saw something incredible—so incredible that it caused them to put their faith in Christ.

#### 4. Taking It Inward

Continue—

Mary and Martha never saw any of this coming. And we don’t see those things either. We want the free coffee. God wants to do something far greater, something more than you or I can possibly imagine.

So we’re left with a few questions: What are the things in my life that cause me pain? Is it possible that God could use that pain to motivate me to move toward something much bigger than the superficial things I’m after now? Where could God be working through that pain to help others see Jesus and actually put their faith in him?

#### 5. Wrapping It Up

Finish with—

Think for a minute about the things in your life that cause you pain. **Relationships. Loss. Hurt.** [Allow a few seconds of silence.] **Now think for a minute about how these situations could play out in a way that makes your faith grow and causes others to put their faith in Christ.**

It would be easy to react like Martha by simply saying to Jesus something like: “If only you would have...” And Jesus can certainly intervene. But if he doesn’t, he will use your pain as a gateway into a deeper, more present relationship with him.

#### OPTIONAL MIX-INS

Here are a few facts you may want to point out from John 11:

*-Jesus had a small gang of friends in Bethany; these would have been the people he hung out with, his Starbucks friends—Mary, Martha, and their brother, Lazarus.*

*-Lazarus was deathly sick. Knowing that Jesus was pretty good at the healing thing, Mary and Martha sent word that the one he loved was sick—stressing the fact that Lazarus was the one he loved!*

*-Surprisingly, Jesus stayed where he was for a few days, almost like he was teasing Mary and Martha.*

*-And then, Lazarus died, which did cause Jesus to cry, and it caused Mary and Martha to get mad at Jesus, saying, “If you’d have been here sooner, none of this would have happened.”*

*-But Jesus had other plans. Mary and Martha wanted a sick person healed. Jesus wanted something even greater, though it sure didn’t look like it to them. Their brother was dead. And they were in pain.*